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SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

Occupational Employment and Wages in Hattiesburg – May 2017

Workers in the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.03 in May 2017, about 26 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 21 of the 22 major occupational groups including management; sales and related; and life, physical and social science. One group—farming, fishing, and forestry—had a significantly higher wage than its respective national average.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 4 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support, and sales and related. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; computer and mathematical; and architecture and engineering. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Hattiesburg	United States	Hattiesburg	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$24.34	\$18.03*	-26
Management	5.1	5.2	57.65	35.98*	-38
Business and financial operations	5.2	2.7*	36.70	26.62*	-27
Computer and mathematical	3.0	0.7*	43.18	33.08*	-23
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.7*	41.44	30.96*	-25
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.3*	35.76	24.14*	-32
Community and social service	1.5	1.0*	23.10	18.49*	-20
Legal	0.8	0.5*	51.62	31.26*	-39
Education, training, and library	6.1	7.1	26.67	20.63*	-23
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	0.5*	28.34	20.09*	-29
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.0	9.3	38.83	32.27*	-17
Healthcare support	2.9	3.3	15.05	12.11*	-20
Protective service	2.4	2.0	22.69	15.11*	-33
Food preparation and serving related	9.3	10.4*	11.88	10.16*	-14
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.1	2.5*	13.91	10.71*	-23
Personal care and service	3.6	2.8*	13.11	10.42*	-21
Sales and related	10.2	11.6*	19.56	12.95*	-34
Office and administrative support	15.4	18.3*	18.24	14.26*	-22
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.3	13.87	16.01*	15
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.4	24.01	17.52*	-27
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.7*	23.02	20.36*	-12
Production	6.3	5.9	18.30	16.54*	-10

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Hattiesburg	United States	Hattiesburg	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Transportation and material moving	7.0	6.6	17.82	14.86*	-17

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Hattiesburg had 11,230 jobs in office and administrative support occupations, accounting for 18.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 15.4-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$14.26, significantly below the national wage of \$18.24.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included customer service representatives (1,980), secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (1,360), and stock clerks and order fillers (1,070). Among the higher paying jobs in this group were production, planning, and expediting clerks, and first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with mean hourly wages of \$22.95 and \$21.68, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$8.84) and receptionists and information clerks (\$11.06). (Detailed data for office and administrative support occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_25620.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, bill and account collectors were employed at 1.9 times the national rate in Hattiesburg, and customer service representatives, at 1.7 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, tellers had a location quotient of 1.1 in Hattiesburg, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels; and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area included 917 establishments with a response rate of 75 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm.

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2017 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2017 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Forrest, Lamar, and Perry Counties in Mississippi.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	11,230	1.2	\$14.26	\$29,660
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	800	1.3	21.68	45,100
Switchboard operators, including answering service	50	1.5	12.62	26,250
Bill and account collectors.....	220	1.9	13.25	27,560
Billing and posting clerks.....	400	1.9	16.20	33,690
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	800	1.2	18.77	39,050
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	70	1.1	19.87	41,320
Procurement clerks	40	1.2	19.10	39,730
Tellers	230	1.1	12.46	25,920
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	100	1.8	16.21	33,720
Customer service representatives.....	1,980	1.7	11.08	23,040
Eligibility interviewers, government programs.....	60	1.0	15.76	32,770
File clerks	40	0.7	13.25	27,560
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	150	1.4	8.84	18,390
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	90	1.1	13.71	28,510
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	120	1.3	15.21	31,630
Order clerks.....	40	0.6	15.49	32,210
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	30	0.6	18.78	39,060
Receptionists and information clerks.....	510	1.2	11.06	23,010
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	50	1.2	13.18	27,410
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	40	0.5	18.98	39,480
Postal service clerks.....	30	0.9	24.95	51,890
Postal service mail carriers	160	1.1	24.25	50,450
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	110	0.8	22.95	47,740
Stock clerks and order fillers	1,070	1.2	10.22	21,260
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	150	0.6	17.38	36,150
Legal secretaries	(5)	(5)	16.67	34,670
Medical secretaries	290	1.2	12.92	26,870
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	1,360	1.4	14.47	30,100
Data entry keyers	80	1.0	14.40	29,960
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	40	0.3	20.14	41,900
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	40	1.0	8.99	18,690
Office clerks, general.....	940	0.7	15.65	32,560
Office and administrative support workers, all other	40	0.4	17.59	36,590

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Hattiesburg Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_25620.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.